

my friend and distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support of this rule. I am a little confused. Those who are against it are saying they are against it because they cannot get their amendments in. Yet, that same group last week, when the Committee on Rules said, let us have a campaign finance reform bill with lots of amendments, they were totally against that rule. So the reality is here they are against H.R. 7.

Let us review. In 1996, President Clinton, a liberal Democrat, signed into law welfare reform, welfare reform which said that faith-based organizations could participate in the delivery of some certain welfare services. The sky did not fall. For some reason, the sky is still up there.

All this does, H.R. 7, is say, we are going to take the 1996 bedrock signed by President Clinton and expand it to say that faith-based organizations who participate in some form of social services can be eligible to compete for Federal grants that fund such services.

Therefore, St. Paul's A.M.E. Church in Savannah, Georgia, run by Reverend Delaney, in all of his services of food and shelter and education and health care and family structure and family counseling, what they are saying to him is, "Reverend Delaney, if you can divide the soup from the sermon, then what we will do is we will let you compete for a grant to feed the hungry. And what really matters is the full stomach here. That is the Federal Government's interest, not the conversion. You have to divide the soup in the sermon. But if you are doing a good job based on outcome, we are going to let you compete for that grant." That is what the Federal Government interest is, is the outcome.

If the Federal Government and all our Federal agencies were doing such a darned good job of delivering these services, we should have wiped out poverty, because since 1964 we have spent more on the war on poverty than we did to fight World War II.

It is not working. They need a helping hand. Let those who know the recipients, who live in the same ZIP Code and area code, let them compete for this money. They will do a good job.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT).

Mr. WATT of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I find it very interesting to serve in a body where the Committee on Rules 1 week decides that democracy is all about debating every single amendment separately, and then the very next week decides that it will not allow a separate debate on an amendment that would eliminate the ability of religious institutions to discriminate in their employment practices and remove the offensive provision that ev-

erybody is concerned about from this bill.

This is not a debate about government versus God. We made that choice when the Founding Fathers wrote into the Constitution "one Nation, under God," and we have been living with that choice ever since.

But we made a different choice in 1965 when we outlawed discrimination in this country. It was not a unanimous decision by the Nation at that time, but I am appalled 20 or 40 years later now to be debating the issue of whether we will allow religious discrimination to be engaged in in the delivery of services by church institutions, and we are doing it in the name of God.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. TRAFICANT) said, "Beam me up." I want to be beamed up on that false choice. We should have a rule that allows us to offer an amendment to strike this offensive provision from this bill, and then we would have almost unanimous support for the bill. But they would rather have the issue than the support.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding time to me. I thank the Speaker for the opportunity to characterize this date of history that we have today as a debate on a very crucial issue dealing with our view and commitment to the first amendment; that is, the idea of this government not establishing a specific religion for the nation.

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I had hoped to offer the first amendment language as an amendment to this legislation, because I do not believe that we should be charged in this House with characterizing this debate as a question regarding our faith or our commitment in this Nation to our religious beliefs. I think it is important to understand that the Bill of Rights means something, that we cannot establish a religion through government. And certainly I think that as this legislation moves through this House today, giving direct funds to religious institutions makes this legislation as a violation of the Bill of Rights.

I believe if we pass legislation that gives direct funds to religious institutions and then affirms the right of these religious institutions to discriminate as it relates to employment, we are doing the contrary to what the Founding Fathers determined in those early years. Might I say that in the story of the Good Samaritan it was a diverse individual that helped a different individual, used his religion, his commitment of faith and charity, but I do not believe he needed to have an established law of providing Federal funds to a certain religion to make him charitable.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, faith-based organizations currently play an important and vital role in providing needed social welfare programs; and we, as a government, wholeheartedly support this work.

In fiscal year 2000, faith-based organizations administered an estimated \$1 billion in Housing and Urban Development assistance. Catholic Charities, Lutheran Services, Jewish Federation received substantial support from the Federal Government. But in order to get it, they agree not to discriminate. They simply comply with the structure established to comply with two of our Nation's most fundamental principles, equal protection of the law and separation of church and State.

I have helped to establish many 501(c)(3)'s and wonderful organizations who do this work. A thousand religious leaders and organizations are opposed to H.R. 7, including American Baptist Churches USA, Office of Government Relations, Jewish Council on Public Affairs, Presbyterian Church USA, Episcopal Church, Unitarian Universalist Church, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church. Join with them to oppose H.R. 7.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE).

(Mr. PRICE of North Carolina asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, many citizens, including Members of this House, first got into politics and stay involved in politics because of their moral and religious convictions. Religious congregations and organizations are working in communities daily to reach out to those in need, through Meals-on-Wheels, housing complexes for the elderly and the disabled, after-school programs for at-risk youth; and they are often doing this with the help of public funds.

This concept of faith-based initiatives is not new. My experience has been that religious groups are eager and effective in delivering greatly needed social services. But, Mr. Speaker, these groups have willingly organized their activities so as to honor the constitutional injunction against the establishment of religion when administering government funds. They have kept sectarian and social service activities institutionally separate. And they have understood that the use of public funds carries with it an obligation to refrain from discrimination, both among those served and among those hired to provide the service.

While the Democratic substitute preserves these safeguards, the President's proposal threatens to break them down, and for that reason religious groups across the spectrum have raised red flags about the bill before us.

The dual constitutional prohibitions against establishing religion and prohibiting its free exercise protect fairness and freedom in the public realm and also the autonomy and integrity of